



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

I hope everyone had a great Labor Day weekend and took advantage of the opportunity to hike, bike, camp or visit any one of the wonderful travel destinations Arizona has to offer. As we move further into the fall season, the AOT staff is gearing up for a busy travel season packed with international and domestic trade shows and sales missions to help promote the Grand Canyon State as a premier visitor destination. In fact, many partnership opportunities to join the AOT staff on these missions are starting to pick up, and if you want to be a part of these prospects, be sure to pay close attention to future AOT in Action newsletters for announcements to any one of our upcoming partnership opportunities!

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Needs Calendar of Events

AOT is requesting information to be considered for the calendar of events posted at www.ArizonaGuide.com. The calendar is currently updated with events through December 2007, and will soon be adding 2008 information. Events to be considered must be open to the public and of interest to participants or spectators from neighboring communities across Arizona or from out of state. Submissions should include the date, including the year; community in which the event takes place, name of event; venue; venue address; description; admission price, event time; phone number and/or Web site for the public to obtain additional information. Please include your contact information so that we may reach you with any questions we may have prior to posting your event. Photography is encouraged, (images should be a minimum of 300 DPI at 4"x5" original size) and we can supply you with an image information form. Additional events through December 2007 may also be submitted immediately if the event is not posted. Please check the Web site to see if your event is already included. If you have questions or would like an event submission form, please contact Marjorie Magnusson at 602-364-3695, by fax at 602-364-3702 or via e-mail at Mmagnusson@azot.gov.

AOT's Arizona Tourism Indicators 2nd Quarter 2007 Newsletter Now Online

The 2nd Quarter Tourism Indicators Newsletter is now available on the Research section of www.azot.gov. The newsletter contains 2nd quarter 2007 indicators for lodging, air passenger traffic, tourism related tax revenues, State and National Park visitation and visitor counts from Painted Cliffs Welcome Center. For more information, contact Beth Billings, Research Coordinator, at 602-3789 bbillings@azot.gov.

AOT Staff Member Joins Governor for Parade

Dawn Melvin, AOT's Native American Tourism Development Manager attended the Navajo Nation Tribal Fair and Parade with Governor Napolitano on Saturday, September 8, 2007. The 61st Annual Navajo Nation Fair theme is "The Navajo Leaders, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." Governor Napolitano was driven in the parade with former Navajo Nation President and Chairman, Peterson Zah. Dawn, along with various state tribal liaisons and the governor's staff members walked along the parade route and passed out treats and school supplies to the crowd.

New Account Manager in the UK

AOT is pleased to announce a new account manager for the UK & Ireland. Sangita Makwana joined McCluskey International, AOT's UK representative in August 2007. Sangita brings with her an extensive tourism background, having spent the last 11 years in sales for Air Jamaica, based in London handling the UK and Europe. Her knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism will be an enormous asset to Arizona in this important international market. Sangita will be joining the Arizona delegation at World Travel Market in November, and will visit Arizona shortly after that to experience Arizona first hand.

Industry News

DHS: WHTI Passport Rule to Return Oct. 1

The Department of Homeland Security is reminding airlines and the traveling public that the temporary Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative accommodation allowing U.S. citizens to travel by air within the Western Hemisphere using a Department of State official proof of passport application receipt will end as scheduled at midnight on Sept. 30. U.S. citizens who departed the country under this travel accommodation prior to Oct. 1 with proof of a passport application receipt and government-issued identification will be readmitted with these same documents if returning to the U.S. after Sept. 30. Under the WHTI, a law enacted last January, all airline

passengers are required to have a valid passport in order to enter and depart from the U.S. However, the law, which will be extended next year to land borders and seaports, spurred millions of travelers to apply for passports. The unprecedented influx of passport applications inundated the State Department, which was unable to keep up with the demand. As a result, the DHS in June issued the temporary rule to allow air passengers to proceed with their summer travel plans. (*Special to TA; Travel Weekly.com; Modern Agent.com*)

Border Trade Alliance Objects to New Federal Policy for Checking Licenses

The Border Trade Alliance (BTA,) a non-profit U.S. association that addresses economic issues on the North American borders, wrote a letter to Department of Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff objecting to U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) new policy of manually checking at least 60 percent of U.S. citizens' driver's license information at all land ports-of-entry on both the Mexican and Canadian border. According to the BTA, this policy has not been the norm and is causing unacceptable wait times, resulting in a loss of economic activity in cross-border trade and commerce. The BTA has asked CBP to stop this practice. The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) is not scheduled to go into effect at land ports-of-entry until anywhere from January 2008 to June 2009.

International Visits Up 12 Percent in June

The Department of Commerce reports that 3.8 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in June, an increase of 12 percent over June 2006. Total visitation for the first six months of 2007 was up more than 8 percent from the same period in 2006. International visitors also spent more than \$10.0 billion during the month, up 14 percent from June 2006, and \$58.0 billion year-to-date, up 10 percent from the first six months of 2006. Canadian visitation grew 9 percent over June 2006, while arrivals from Mexico among those traveling to interior U.S. points were up 25 percent in June. Overseas arrivals, excluding Canada and Mexico, were up 12 percent over June 2006 and were up 8 percent for the first six months of this year compared to the same period last year. Details at 202-482-0140. (*Special to TA*)

World Tourism Day on September 27th

TIA will join cities, states and nations around the globe in saluting World Tourism Day on September 27th. Developed by the U.N. World Tourism Organization, World Tourism Day provides an officially sanctioned marker within the year to share the power of travel and engage local audiences—from visitors and media to legislators and boards—on the unique role of travel and tourism. Resources to help you communicate, including a customizable news release with current tourism statistics and travel industry fact cards, will be provided within two weeks, but place September 27th on your calendars now and begin considering how you might be involved. For more information, visit www.unwto.org/wtd/index.php.

Eco-awareness Now Hottest in Travel Trends

What's the single hottest travel trend today? Eco-awareness, say some experts. "A couple of years ago, you didn't hear about this as much, but now upscale travelers want to do whatever they can to be eco-conscious," Alexandre Chemla, president and owner of Altour International, told *Forbes*. Forty three million US travelers say they are concerned about ecological consciousness in the hospitality industry, according to research from Green Hotel Association. The trend is everywhere. Car rental companies Hertz, Budget and Avis are adding more fuel-efficient cars to their fleet, and many limo companies use hybrid vehicles. Hotel chains including Fairmont and Aloft also have new green programs. Another trend in upscale travel: private jet charters. There are around 500 private jet operators worldwide, up from around 100 just five years ago. Prices to

charter a plane have also declined to as little as \$2,200 an hour for three to five people, down from \$3,800 five years ago. *(Report by David Wilkening, for TravelMole e-Newsletter)*

Fed Report Finds Tourism Strong in 5 Regions

Turmoil in financial markets in August caused further pain in the housing market, but there were few signs it was harming the broad economy, the Federal Reserve said Wednesday. In its "beige book" report, an anecdotal look at the economy across the U.S. named for the color of the report's cover, the Fed said economic activity had "continued to expand" in late July and August, marked by "modest to moderate" retail sales, healthy manufacturing activity and increases in employment in most parts of the country. Tourism was reported to be strong in the second, fifth, sixth, ninth and tenth Fed districts. *(Pages 4B, USA Today; A2, Wall Street Journal)*

Baby Boomers Continue to be Prime Tourist Market

With the first wave of baby boomers approaching retirement age in the near future, the senior market will continue to be one of the fastest growing areas of tourism, notes Peter E. Tarlow in *Tourism Tidbits*. "From a tourism perspective this market is really three markets, what we may call the 'young seniors,' the 'middle seniors,' and the 'older seniors,'" he says. Some data he suggests is valuable for these markets:

- Tourism officials would do well to remember that senior citizens now live longer than did their parents, tend to be more active and travel more. By 2015 they will control a large percentage of the world's assets and will have a tendency to both spend more and to demand more.
- The parents of today's upcoming senior citizens tended to spoil them as children. This means that senior citizens are not afraid to demand what they want and complain until they get it.
- Especially in an age of terrorism and in places of high crime, seniors will demand good security. Those cities that have developed TOPs (tourism oriented policing/protection services) units will have an added marketing advantage.
- Seniors often have almost zero tolerance for poor service. Tourism locales that wish to capture the senior market need to review not only their physical structures but also the size of print that they use in information brochures and signage, and the level of customer service and visitor protection offered.
- The migration toward "livable outer fringes" means that tourism facilities can no longer be centered just in the principle cities. Smart tourism bureaus will know how to take advantage of a dispersed tourism market and attract people who now shun the inner cities due to perceived high crime rates, poor customer service, and difficult parking conditions.
- The lack of good airline service will become a major difficulty for the senior tourism industry. Many airlines have switched to smaller and less comfortable aircraft. The trend has helped to make travel especially hard on senior travelers.

(Report by David Wilkening, TravelMole e-Newsletter)

High-Flying Women of the World

It's no longer a niche market says CNN. Nearly half of business travelers are women, and the early lip service of an odd nail file in vanity bags and hotel doors with security peepholes, are no longer enough to give businesses an edge. Hotels are thinking up innovations that go beyond the standard fare. Reception staff are better trained to be discreet when checking in women guests and avoid saying their room numbers out loud. Spas and fitness centers offer in-room exercise programs and treatments. Business centers provide webcams, which helps working mothers keep

in touch with children. In-room facilities are improving, too, to include full-view mirrors and powerful hair-dryers (positioned close together), as well as skirt hangers. But global market research firm Mintel says that the business environment and its facilities still require a touch of 'feminizing', with accommodation requiring better pampering products, as well as childcare facilities for working mothers on the road. Their research found that hotels are, on the whole, less inviting to women, who may prefer to return home rather than stay away overnight. It can be more difficult for women to dine and drink alone in a hotel as they can be the target of unwanted attention. While room service is an option, it can be a lonely one. Hotel maitre d's can play a vital role in welcoming single female diners and, for example, placing them together at a table. Businesswomen may still be underserved by the travel industry but hotel booking agency Expotel says life for the lone female is improving. They launched a Woman Aware campaign a decade ago, flagging up "female friendly" hotels, which fulfill ten key criteria and have been nominated by three independent female travelers. Currently, seven of the ten criteria relate to security, including a well lit, secure car park or valet parking, and permanently lit corridors.

Travelers Using Facebook

Hatched in a Harvard University dorm room three years ago as a way to keep tabs on fellow students, the social networking site Facebook is becoming a go-to destination for travelers – and not just the type who frequent youth hostels or friends' couches. Since opening its virtual doors last fall to anyone with an e-mail address, says USA Today, Facebook has graduated to more than 37 million users, and the 25-and-over crowd is its fastest-growing demographic. A key factor in the site's rapid ascent: development of more than 3,000 free, third-party software applications that let Facebook "friends" trade everything from travel tips, Scrabble scores and books they're reading to hedge fund advice via a fantasy stock exchange. The most popular of Facebook's 100-odd travel applications, downloaded by more than 2.6 million members since its launch by a freelance Web developer in June, is Where I've Been – a map that highlights places users have been to, lived in and hope to visit. The interactive map includes a smattering of facts for each destination. This month, rumors swirled – and were swatted down – that Expedia-owned TripAdvisor had paid \$3 million for Where I've Been. The buzz surrounding the phantom sale to TripAdvisor, which offers a similar Cities I've Visited map on Facebook, shows the site "is certainly making an impact on travel," says Lorraine Sileo of PhoCusWright, a travel research firm.